

SENATE RESOLUTION 172

By Dixon

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Larry E. Garrett for  
laudable service to the people of his community  
as a businessman and to the children of his  
community as a teacher and educational  
professional.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those  
citizens who through their extraordinary efforts have distinguished themselves as business  
professionals, community leaders and educators of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Larry E. Garrett, who since the summer of  
2001, has served astutely as Principal of Douglass Elementary School in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, as a child, Larry Garrett lived in the Douglass area, but attended Hyde Park  
Elementary because it was on his father's way to work; his father, Joseph Garrett, worked for a  
cement company supplying materials for the construction of I-40, built homes and operated  
Joe's, a café on Stonewall in the New Chelsea community; and

WHEREAS, Larry spent a year at Douglass School around the corner from Douglass  
Elementary, before moving to Chicago with his mother, the late Theresa Garrett; he attended  
Roosevelt University in Chicago with the intent of pursuing a career in law, but was drafted into  
the United States Army before he could realize that goal; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Garrett served bravely in Vietnam from 1966-69, earning a Bronze Star for meritorious service in leading a platoon against a North Vietnamese Battalion; he was honorably discharged from military service with the rank of Captain; and

WHEREAS, Larry Garrett then decided to return to Memphis, where he became a field representative for the Urban League and published a newspaper called the *Memphis Citizen*; he later served in the administration of Governor Winfield Dunn as Assistant Director of the Office of Minority Business Enterprise. Although now an Independent, he was active during the 1970s and early 1980s in the Shelby County Republican Party, serving in various party offices and running for election to the Tennessee House of Representatives in 1972 and 1980; and

WHEREAS, acting upon his experience in Nashville, Mr. Garrett recognized opportunities in real estate and earned a Bachelor's degree of Business Administration, Real Estate and Finance from what was then Memphis State University in 1975; he opened Regal Realty which he operated from 1975-1985, and worked assiduously to transform the firm into the largest black-owned real estate firm in the Mid-South. The firm was housed in the Regal Building at 1188 Minna Place in Midtown, owned by Larry Garrett; in 1978, according to the *Commercial Appeal*, the firm had 44 employees, including 22 sales agents and had 1977 sales of about \$8 million; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Garrett closed Regal Realty because of conflicts between his religious convictions and the demands of business as a landlord of rental properties, including Regal Plaza in Whitehaven and the Eastview Duplexes on Walnut Grove; he had been teaching real estate courses at the University of Memphis, LeMoyne-Owen College and the old State Technical Institute since in the mid-1970s and had developed a knack for teaching, so he decided on a career course change; and

WHEREAS, Larry Garrett began study for a Master of Science Degree in Curriculum and Instructional Leadership at the University of Memphis and began teaching at Lincoln

Elementary; he has also served as Assistant Principal at Gordon Elementary and Title I facilitator at Rozelle Elementary; and

WHEREAS, he received his Master's degree and was certified in 1996, earned a degree as an Educational Policy and Leadership Specialist at the University of Memphis in 1999, and is currently enrolled in a National Doctoral Program for Educational Leaders at Nova Southeastern University; and

WHEREAS, in the year 2000, Mr. Garrett returned to his childhood neighborhood to serve as Assistant Principal of Douglass Elementary under then Principal Hester J. Ladd; the following year, he became principal of the 442 student kindergarten through fifth grade school with the ambition of improving its students' academic performance; and

WHEREAS, Douglass was recognized for showing improvement in most academic areas on its most recent state report card; Larry Garrett firmly believes that by utilizing its strong alumni association, adopters from church, civic and corporate communities, a strengthening faculty spirit and a growing emphasis on technology the school will be able to stack up against any other Shelby County school in three years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Garrett takes pride in Douglass's role in the community, with its early childhood programs, adult basic education classes aimed at assisting adults to obtain GED diplomas, and the presence of a Department of Human Services representative, a clothes closet and units of the Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts at the school; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his commitment to his work as a professional educator, Larry Garrett is an active member of the New Hope Baptist Church in Southaven; he resides in the Frayser community, is the father of three grown children and enjoys reading, fishing and public speaking; and

WHEREAS, Larry Garrett epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Larry E. Garrett for his dedication to Memphis, Shelby County and the State of Tennessee and its citizens, especially our children; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we hereby honor and commend Larry E. Garrett for his meritorious service to the children of the greater Memphis community and the people of Tennessee as Principal of Douglass Elementary School and extend to him our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.